AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1.-10. Canceled.

11. (New) A method for treating an infectious disease comprising topically applying to the infected body area of a patient suffering from said disease an ointment comprising a penem antibiotic or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof in a non-aqueous base.

12. (New) The method of claim 11 wherein the non-aqueous base is a non-aqueous hydrophobic base.

13. (New) The method of claim 12 wherein the penem antibiotic is (+)-(5R, 6S)-6-[(R)-1-hydroxyethyl]-7-oxo-3-[(R)-2-tetrahydrofuryl]-4-thia-1-azabicyclo[3.2.0]hepto-2-ene-2-carboxylic acid or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

14. (New) The method of Claim 11 wherein the ointment comprises from 0.1 to 10% by weight, expressed as free anhydride on the basis of the entire ointment, of the penem antibiotic or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

15. (New) The method of claim 14 wherein the infectious disease is selected from the group consisting of infectious diseases of dermatological, ophthalmogotic, otolaryngologic, dental/oral surgical and urogenital fields.

16. (New) The method of claim 15 wherein the ointment further comprises one or more additives selected from gelatinizers, thickening agents, viscosifier, viscosity enhancers and elasticizers incorporated in the base.

17. (New) The method of claim 16 wherein the ointment further comprises one or more of water-soluble or hydrophilic polymer compounds incorporated in the base.

18. (New) The method of claim 17 wherein the water-soluble or hydrophilic polymer compound is one or more members selected from the group consisting of carmellose, carmellose sodium, polyvinyl alcohol, polyvinyl pyrrolidone, polyacrylic acid, sodium polyacrylate, hydroxymethylcellulose, hydroxypropylcellulose, hydroxypropylmethylcellulose, hydroxyethylcellulose, hydroxyethylmethylcellulose, xanthan gum, tragacanth gum, guar gum, locust bean gum, arabic gum, chitosan, sodium alginate, starches, gelatins, hydrophobic hydroxypropylmethyl cellulose, which is incorporated at 0.1 to 10% by weight on the basis of the ointment.

19. (New) The method of claim 11 wherein the infectious disease is a dermatological disease.

20. (New) The method of claims 11 wherein the infectious disease is a periodontal disease.

21. (New) A method for increasing the stability of a penem antibiotic or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof in a pharmaceutical composition comprising compounding the penem antibiotic or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof as the

active ingredient in a non-aqueous base, whereby the active ingredient is more stable than the same composition except that the base substance is not non-aqueous.

22. (New) The method of claim 21 wherein the penem antibiotic or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof is (+)-(5R,6S)-6-[(R)-1-hydroxyethyl]-7-oxo-3-[-(R)-2-tetrahydrofuryl]-4- thia–1-azabicyclo[3.2.0]hepto-2-ene-2-carboxylic acid or a pharmaceutically salt thereof.

23. (New) The method of claim 21 wherein the non-aqueous base is a non-aqueous hydrophobic base.

24. (New) The method of claim 23 wherein the pharmaceutical composition comprises from 0.1 to 10% by weight expressed a free anhydride on the basis of the entire ointment, of the penem antibiotic or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

25. (New) The method of claim 24 wherein the composition is capable of retaining at least 92% of the activity of the active ingredient after storage in a closed container for 2 months at 4°C.